on-Rockville: e of Contrasts

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Connecticut Public Expenditure Council figures show Vernon placed 99th out of 169 towns in 1982, when it spent $2,376 to educate each student compared to a state average of $2,646.

Town government has also spread its operations between the two sections.

The Police Department is in Vernon, but the Town Hall, Senior Citizens' Center, Board of Education administration building and both tiers of Vernon Superior Court are in Rockville.

The town's largest employer, aside from the town itself, is in Rockville — the 105-bed Rockville General Hospital, which has about 500 employees.

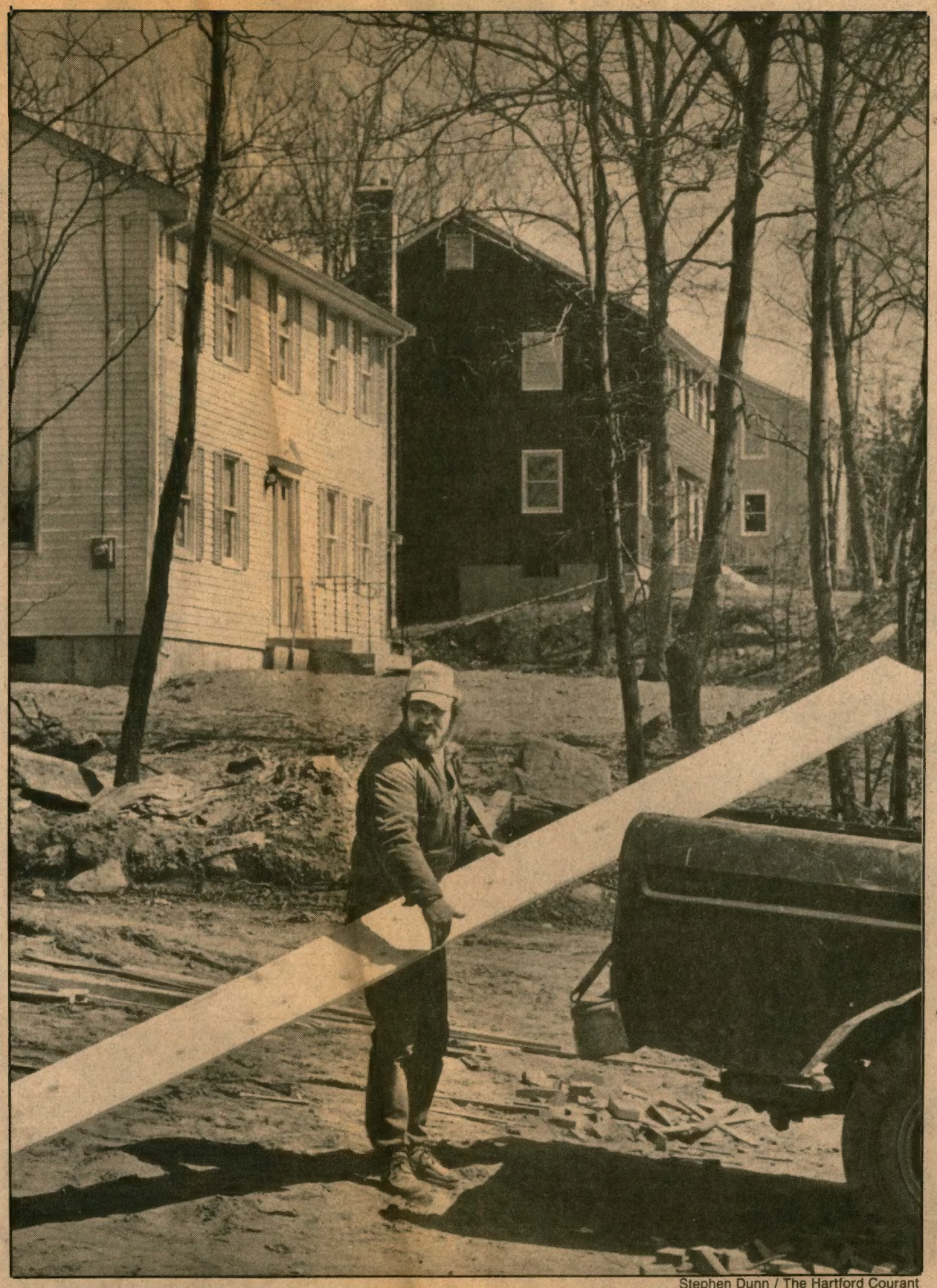
Many of the town's other employers are small businesses that have clustered along routes 83 and 30 in Vernon, creating a melange of gas stations, fast-food restaurants, condominiums, apartment complexes and stores.

"It was like too much, too soon" and not enough planning was done, said Ann Letendre, who lives in one of Vernon's upper-middle class subdivisions with sprawling ranch-style homes and huge colonials — and a backyard that faces a restaurant's parking lot.

But having all those businesses is convenient, said Toni Mosey of Deepwood Drive. She moved to Vernon a year ago. "I don't have to go very far for shopping. I find I don't go out of Vernon very much. Vernon doesn't have everything but it has enough for most of my daily needs," she said.

The people of Vernon can choose to shop in convenience stores or large, modern supermarkets. Housing is available from apartments in large complexes to apartments in former mansions; from contemporary-style ranches to multi-story Victorian homes.

"It is a community with a lot of contrasts," Letendre said. "That can be jarring to some people, but for myself I like that."



Stephen Dunn / The Hartford Courant

Anthony Dougherty of East Hartford, a laborer for LaCava Construction, works at a housing development site on Grady Road in the southern section of Vernon. The homes will sell for about $100,000.

Documentar Strong Form At HBO, PBS

Continued from Page C1

critical reviews as it nears the end of its second season. Public TV stations voted last month to renew the show for a third year of 19 hour-long programs.

Tonight, "Frontline" tackles a familiar subject in a fresh way. "Chasing the Basketball Dream" looks at the academic and recruiting pressures on two high school basketball stars — one an inner-city black, the other a suburban black — as they decide where to attend college.

The flurry of activity at HBO and "Frontline" contrasts with the quiet at the networks. ABC's last documentary was a retrospective on John F. Kennedy in November, while CBS hasn't done one since an Andy Rooney travelog in January. (NBC has been busier, with two documentaries this month.)

The networks all say they will do fewer documentaries this year than last. ABC is planning six hours and NBC has scheduled eight. CBS says it hasn't made a decision yet. Last year, each did about 12 hours.

"The documentary is essentially dead on the networks," says Michael Kirk, the senior producer of "Frontline."

That's overstating the case. But the traditional hour-long documentary does seem to face an uncertain future.

CBS, for example, has shifted its resources to "The American Parade," a breezy and brassy magazine show that focuses on the good news about America. It's an appealing show, but not a substitute for the hard-hitting "CBS Reports." The network says an unspecified number of "CBS Reports" broadcasts will be shown in "The American Parade" time slot.

ABC is taking a different tack, trying to make two- or three-hour programs that look in depth at selected issues.

One example: a three-hour program on American public schools will pre-empt an entire evening of prime-time programming in September. Peter Jennings is also preparing to host two hour-long shows on the Middle East.

The networks say they are doing fewer documentaries this year because of the demands of election coverage and, in ABC's case, the Olympics. But a long-term trend toward fewer documentaries is evident; CBS and NBC did as many as 35 to 40 hours a year in their peak years of the 1960s.

Documentaries, generally, get poor ratings. Networks often bury them in summer schedules or on holidays, when viewing levels are low.

That isn't a problem for cable or public television. HBO's Potter says the cable system doesn't need large ratings to succeed, so long as it offers enough programming each month to satisfy its customers.

When HBO ran several documentaries in the last year, its research found viewers responding favorably.

Murder is a favorite subject at HBO. Earlier this year, the cable system ran a show on why women kill, and "Murder: No Apparent Motive" focuses on a similar topic. Another HBO show looked at people who have used handguns.

The topics — all of which seem to be deliberately contemporary headline-grabbers — are influenced by research in which the cable network calls subscribers to test ideas on them. Potter says the research is "just to see whether our instincts prove to be right . . . We're certainly not going for exploitation."

"Frontline," meanwhile, offers

Potato-Eating Guidelines With a Grain of Salt

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times they do), but they take a lot for granted.

Basically, this lady's rule is correct. However, she would be the first to admit that you would look equally incorrect eating any type of potato with your fingers in a pretentious restaurant, except potato chips, which wouldn't be served there, or demanding a fork for any potatoes in what we shall call a less pretentious restaurant.

DEAR MISS MANNERS — I consider myself a thoughtful hostess, and I look for guests wherever I happen to be. The week before having people over, I make elegant dishes. Everybody has a good time.

So what's the problem? That hardly anybody reciprocates, that's what.

My husband, who is 21 years older than I, blames himself for the lack of invitations. He says people probably say to themselves, "That old fogy doesn't need to get out." He also says if I were married to a man my age, we would be popular.

We are both bookworms and have a great time reading. Once in a blue moon, however, I feel like hearing the phone ring or an excited voice say, "Come over to a great party." No luck.

GENTLE READER — Let's deal with the emergency first and then get to the party problem. Your husband is being gallant by seeking to take the blame to comfort you. The danger is that he believes what he says; even if he doesn't, he will if he keeps repeating it.

There isn't a chance that people are talking about your husband's age. What they are actually saying is, "We really must have some people over — the Goodhearts have had us several times now — but the house looks awful and we might as well wait until we can afford to get it painted.

"Mrs. Goodheart always does everything so beautifully — I'm embarrassed to have her taste my cooking.

"It would take me a week to turn out a dinner like that."

You should not lower your standard of entertaining or drop all lazy people. In the first instance, you would only decrease the amount of enjoyment in the world; in the second, you would be hard put to find guests.

Go on entertaining, and occasionally tell someone you like, "We often feel sociable when I just don't feel like cooking. Give us a call sometime, if you feel like doing something with us."

But you may not, Miss Manners must tell you, continue to seek consolation from your husband. At most, you may complain to him, "Isn't it awful that no one seems to know how to entertain anymore? They're all anxious to come and see us — you notice they jump at the chance — but nobody's willing to bother and give a party themselves."

Miss Manners is the nom de plume of Judith Martin, a columnist for United Features Syndicate. Write to her in care of The Courant, Features Department, 285 Broad St., Hartford, Conn., 06115.

SHOWTIMES

:30, 5:45, 9:10 with Pan-
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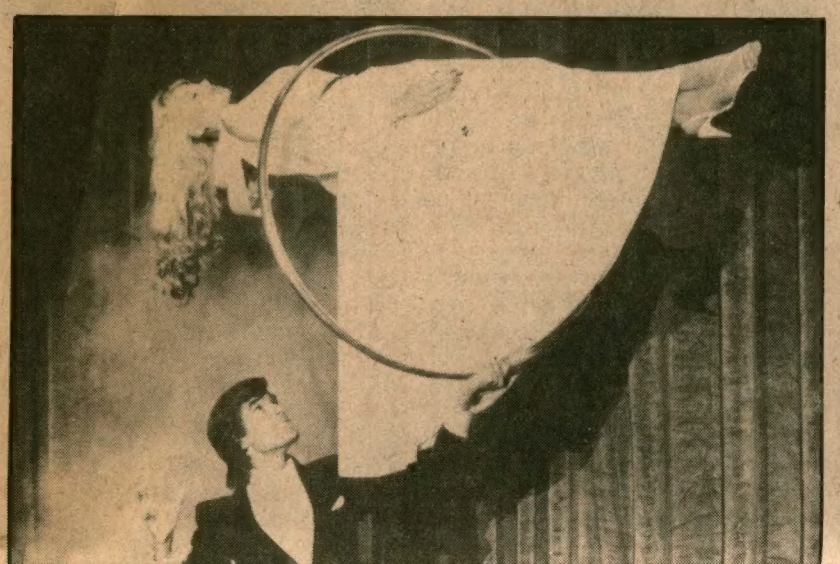
SUFFIELD
Village Cinema — Terms of Endearment (PG) 7.
TORRINGTON
Holiday Cinemas — Moscow on the Hudson (R) 7, 9:10.—Splash (PG) 7, 9:10.—Up the Creek (R) 7:15, 9:15.—Romancing the Stone (PG) 7:10, 9:20.—Greystoke: The Legend of Tarzan, Lord of the Apes (PG) 7, 9:25.—Police Academy (R) 7:30, 9:25.
Parkade Cinema — Racing with the Moon (PG) 7, 9.
VERNON
Cine 1 & 2 — Terms of Endearment (PG) 7, 9:30.—Against All Odds (R) 7:15, 9:40.
WALLINGFORD
Colony Cinemas 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 — Romancing the Stone (PG) 1:30, 4, 7:10, 9:20.—Greystoke: The Legend of Tarzan, Lord of the Apes (PG) 1:30, 4, 7, 9:25.—Splash (RG) 1:30, 4, 7, 9:10.—Moscow on the Hudson (R) 1:30, 4, 7:15, 9:25.—Police Academy (R) 1:30, 4, 7:30, 9:25.
WATERBURY
Cinema 1, 2, 3 & 4 — Greystoke: The Legend of Tarzan, Lord of the Apes (PG) 1:05, 4, 7:05, 9:40.—Moscow on the Hudson (R) 1, 3:30, 7, 9:30.—Hard to Hold (PG) 1:15, 3:15, 5:15, 7:15, 9:15.—Romancing the Stone (PG) 1:55,

His Success Is Just Illusion

Continued from Page C1

only risk embarrassment" by trying such stunts.

In the past few years, he has taken risks of epic proportion.

He has created illusions in which a Ferrari levitated, a Learjet vanished and the Statue of Liberty disappeared. Next year, he will attempt to walk through the Great Wall in China.

Some of his favorite illusions, Copperfield says, are smaller in scale. They are the ones that al-